

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**RE Group:** \_\_\_\_\_

**My target grade:** \_\_\_\_\_



# Homework

Topic	Date to be completed by
9.1 The nature of God: God as One	
9.2 The nature of God: God as creator	
9.3 The nature of God: God as lawgiver and judge	
9.4 Life after death, judgement and resurrection	
9.5 The nature and role of the Messiah	
9.6 The Promised Land and the covenant with Abraham	
9.7 The covenant at Sinai and the 10 Commandments	
9.8 Key moral principles in Judaism	
9.9 Sanctity of Life	
9.10 Free will and mitzvot	

### **How do I use my homework book?**

This homework book is designed to reinforce your learning that began in your lessons. After a topic is completed in lessons, read the topic section in your text book. Then, read and **memorise** the topic facts summary in this book. You will then be tested **each week** on your knowledge.

Use your homework book well and you will be better prepared for your assessment tests, and then the final summer exam.

Judaism is a **monotheistic** religion (believe in one God). Jews do not believe that God came to earth as a human being and do not accept that Jesus is God. Jews put great emphasis on God being the **creator**, and God sustains creation by caring for His people. In return for this, God requires **loyalty** from His people, to whom He has given laws. Jews believe that God will judge them according to how they follow the laws. Jews believe that they can learn what God is like by studying their **history** and that God is revealed throughout their history. They study God by looking at Jewish scriptures such as the **Tenakh**. For Jews, they see God in the past, **present** and future as they believe that he is constantly at work. Despite being a monotheistic religion, there are lots of different types of Jews who interpret Judaism in different ways, resulting in **diversity** in practice.

Some Jews do not write the word God, preferring G\_d instead. They write it like this as a mark of respect. God's name is seen to be so holy, that once it has been written down it must not be **erased** or destroyed. In Hebrew the name for God is **YHWH**, this is never said out loud and when it appears in the Jewish scripture it is replaced with the word Adonai which means 'my Lord'. Any book containing the name of God is treated with utmost respect and is never **destroyed**. When it becomes too old to be used it is buried in a cemetery. Even though it might be written in different ways God and G\_d refer to the same one God, and not **different** parts of God or different gods.

For Jews, God as One means that God is always present in people's lives through every sight they see, things they hear or the **experiences** that they have. All are seen as an encounter with God. This belief is stated in the **Shema**, a Jewish prayer that begins:

'Hear, O Israel! The Lord is our God, the Lord alone. You shall love the Lord your God with all your **heart** and with all your soul and with all your might'.

The reference to loving God with your heart implies that God requires loyalty, and the mention of the **soul** suggests that spiritual dedication is needed to the one God.

The first words of the **Torah** are 'When God began to create heaven and earth'. Jews believe that God created the world out of **nothing**. Many Orthodox Jews believe that God created the world in six days and this happened about **6,000** years ago, they also reject the idea of evolution. Other Jews accept that whilst God is still creator, **evolution** may be correct and that the world is a lot older. On the **seventh** day of creation God rested and this is remembered weekly by Jews when they celebrate **Shabbat**.

In order for God to create, He must have powers that no other human being has. Jews believe that God is **omnipotent** (all powerful), omniscient (all **knowing**) and omnipresent (everywhere at all times). Jews believe that God created all things, in Judaism there is no **devil** and therefore God created evil. However, he gave humans **free** will which allows them to choose between doing good or bad. Being able to choose to do good makes doing good more important. Some Jews find it hard to believe that God created the **potential** for evil, especially when considering events like the **holocaust**, however, that is seen as a consequence of giving people free will.

Jews believe that not only did God create the universe, but he also **sustains** it. God has given enough resources on the planet so that every **species** is provided for. The fact that some have more than others is a result of giving humans free will. Those Jews who give to others help to **fulfil** God's plan for the world.

### 9.3 The nature of God: as lawgiver and judge

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*In this topic you will understand God as lawgiver and judge and the concept of the Shekhinah*

God gave Jews free will, however, he also gave them many **laws** (mitvot) to help them exercise their free will in the way that He would like them to. The basis for these laws are the 10 **Commandments** which were given to Moses on Mount **Sinai** after the Exodus from Egypt. They were originally written on two **tablets** of stone placed in the Ark of the Covenant in the **Temple**. In total there are 613 mitzvot in the Torah which tell the Jews how to live their lives. Jews believe that the basis for their **relationship** with God is that He is the lawgiver.

Jews believe that God will judge them on how well they keep the **mitzvot**. God will judge everyone, Jew or **Gentile** (non Jew) based on their actions. God judges fairly and also with love and mercy. For a Jew, judgement happens once a year during the festival of Rosh **Hashanah** when they reflect on their actions over the previous year. Jews also believe that they will be judged after death when God will decide where they should spend their afterlife.

The word **Shekhinah** does not appear in the Tenakh but its meaning is clear in many of the passages. Shekhinah refers to God's divine **presence** here on earth. After the Exodus from Egypt the Israelites kept the 10 Commandments in the Ark of the **Covenant**. This Ark was kept in the **Tabernacle** which was similar to a tent and could be moved from place to place as the Jews travelled towards Canaan. The Tabernacle was the place where God's divine presence, or Shekhinah was. Also, sometimes the Israelites were led by a **pillar** of cloud or fire, this was also a **visible** sign of the Shekhinah. The Shekhinah is therefore a God's presence amongst His people and a sign of his **power** and glory. The Tabernacle was replaced with the Temple and there are many references by the **prophets** like Isaiah to the presence of God in the **Temple**.

For Jews death is **inevitable** and is part of God's plan. Judaism teaches that if possible no one should die **alone**, the family has a responsibility to look after them. At the time of death it is an act of kindness to close the dead person's **eyes**. Upon hearing about the death, Jews would say a blessing 'Blessed are You, Lord our God, King of the **universe**, the True Judge'. Periods of **mourning** take place and traditional customs would be followed.

Jewish scripture does not contain much teaching about life after death and as a result beliefs have developed over time. Therefore there are **differences** of ideas between different groups of Jews. Some believe in a physical life after death, whilst others believe it will be **spiritual**.

Teachings imply that the good will go to paradise (Gan **Eden**) whereas others will go to a place sometimes referred to as **Sheol**. Sheol is a place of waiting whilst souls are **cleansed**. Jews believe those who follow their faith will be good enough for **Heaven**, although there is no teaching about what Heaven is like. Heaven will be with God but it is uncertain if this will be a **physical** or spiritual place.

Some Jews believe that they will be **judged** by God as soon as they die, whereas others believe God will judge everyone on the Day of Judgement after the coming of the **Messiah**. The prophet **Daniel** tells of a resurrection where people will rise from their **graves** to live again, however, many Jews reject this.

For Jews it is the **present** time and not the future that is more important. Jews focus on living their lives in a way that **pleases** God as much as possible.

In the 12th century Rabbi Moses ben Maimon wrote **13** principles of Jewish faith. The 12th principle is the belief of the arrival of the **Messiah** and a Messianic age. The nature and role of the Messiah has caused much **debate** in Judaism. The word Messiah means **anointed** one, this phrase was originally used to describe the **kings** of Israel. When Saul, the first king of Israel was chosen by the prophet **Samuel**, he was anointed to show he had been chosen by God.

Today the term Messiah is used to describe a **future** leader of the Jews. The Messiah is expected to be a future king of Israel, a descendant of King David who will **rule** the Jews during what is called the Messianic age. Jews **debate** over what the Messianic age will be like. Some believe that it will be after the dead are **resurrected** and will be a time of peace when Israel will be restored.

Orthodox Jews believe that in every **generation** there is a descendant of King David who has the potential to be the Messiah. If the Jews deserve to be **redeemed** then this person will redeem and rule over the whole of creation with **kindness** and justice. He will uphold the law and rebuild the **Temple** in Jerusalem, all Jews will be gathered to Israel, he will promote peace and unite humanity.

In contrast to this many **Reform** Jews reject the idea of a Messiah and believe everyone should work together for peace. They still believe in a Messianic age but believe this will be achieved by everyone **working** together and keeping the law, rather than just through one person.

Unlike Christians, Jews do not believe **Jesus** was the Messiah because he did not fulfil the **expectations** of the Messiah like keeping the law. The belief in the **coming** of a Messiah has given hope for some Jews facing **persecution** and hardship.

Abraham was born in the city of **Ur** about 2,000 BCE. During that time it was common for people to **worship** idols. From an early age Abraham believed that there could only be one God who **created** the earth. He tried to tell others about his beliefs but failed. Abraham left Ur to travel to **Canaan** but did not reach there, instead settling in Haran. God told Abraham to continue the journey to Canaan and made a **covenant** with him: 'I will make of you a great nation, and I will **bless** you'. When Abraham and his wife Sarah had reached Canaan God told Abraham to look **around** and made the second part of the covenant when He said 'I give all the **land** that you see to you and your offspring forever'. God's promise to Abraham means that Canaan is now known to Jews as the **Promised** Land as God promised it to Abraham and his **descendants**.

A covenant is an **agreement** that benefits both parties. It includes promises and responsibilities that should be **undertaken**. Jews believe that the covenants made with people in history like Adam, Abraham and **Moses** were binding not only for those involved but for those they were representing and therefore the covenants still apply to Jewish people **today**. Even though, at times in history the covenant has been **broken** by the Jewish people, God will never break his side of the covenant.

The covenants have led Jews to believe that they have been specially chosen by God to be His **people**. Jews do not see themselves as **superior** to those who are not Jewish, but focus on the **responsibility** of being chosen by God.

Covenants are often sealed by **actions**, and the covenant with Abraham was sealed with the action of circumcision. Abraham accepted that he would be the father of **many** nations by circumcising all males in his household, including himself.

To make the covenant possible, God allowed **Sarah**, Abraham's wife, to conceive, even though she was old and was thought not to be able to have children. The birth of **Isaac** is seen as a gift from God to **reinforce** the covenant between God and His people.

About **400** years after the covenant with Abraham, the **Israelites** ended up as slaves in Egypt. The **Pharaoh** ordered all baby boys to be killed, so Moses' mother put him in a basket and floated him on the river. He was rescued and brought up in the Egyptian **palace**. He was chosen by God, but fled Egypt after killing an Egyptian who was **mistreating** an Israelite. God spoke to Moses through a **burning** bush and told him to return to Egypt. Moses asked Pharaoh to release the slaves, but he **refused**. A number of **plagues** followed, and after the 10th plague (the **angel** of death) the Israelites were allowed to leave. They travelled across the Sea of **Reeds** (Red Sea) to freedom. It is estimated that between several thousand and 3 **million** Jews escaped, in the Torah it suggests it was 600,000 men, most of whom probably had **wives** and children.

Once across the Sea of Reeds, the Israelites wandered for many years in the **desert**. When they arrived at Mount **Sinai**, Moses went up the mountain and received the 10 Commandments. Four of the laws **concerned** the Israelites relationship with God and the other six the **relationship** with each other. These laws were carved on two tablets of stone and later **carried** around in the Ark of the Covenant.

The 10 Commandments include:-

You shall not make for yourself an **sculptured** image, or any likeness

You shall not swear falsely by the name of the Lord your God

Remember the **Sabbath** and keep it holy

Honour your father and your mother

You shall not **murder**

You shall not **commit** adultery

You shall not steal

You shall not bear **false** witness against your neighbour

You shall not covet.

These Commandments form the basis of the **covenant** between God and the Jewish people. God would **protect** the Jews, if, in return, they followed Him and **obeyed** His Commandments.

Judaism is a **complete** way of life, it provides opportunities to **worship** God as well as guidance to help Jews live in a way pleasing to God.

Seeking **justice** is a really important duty for Jews. It can only be **achieved** with truth and peace. It is about doing what is **right** and fair and making up for any wrong. God requires His people to seek justice. The prophet Amos said 'let justice well up like **water**'. Jews believe the **prophets** were sent to help them bring about justice in a kind and merciful way. The Torah teaches about giving justice to the **poor** by treating them with kindness and helping them. Jews will argue that you should never stop trying to seek justice and always should help the poor. If **society** is to be just then everyone needs to work together and contribute by following the laws of the **Torah**.

The concept of **healing** is important in Judaism as it is an action that brings people closer to God. For many it **encourages** them to get involved in charity work and work for social justice for the poor, it also motivates them to work to protect the **environment** which was given by God. Healing the world, for some Jews, is not just doing charity work, but also obeying the mitzvot and trying to get closer to God **spiritually** by acts like prayer.

**Kindness** to others is also an important concept in Judaism, many of the mitzvot demand kindness to others which must be shown to Jews and **non** Jews alike. Jews are commanded to **love** other people as they love themselves (Leviticus 19:8).

## 9.9 Sanctity of Life

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*In this topic you will understand Jewish belief about the sanctity of life.*

The term **sanctity** of life means life is holy or **sacred** and in Judaism this teaching comes from the **creation** story where man is created in the image of God. Life is given by God and therefore should be **respected**.

The belief about the sanctity of life helps Jewish people believe if an action is **moral** (right) and therefore acceptable to God. When looking at moral issues such as abortion, **euthanasia**, war and capital punishment this is a big consideration as life belongs to God and only He can take it away. In Judaism, **humans** have a duty to preserve life and not end it **prematurely**, thus ruling out euthanasia, suicide and murder. However, the advancement of **science** has made life and death decisions more difficult.

Some Jews believe that you should preserve life at all cost, whereas others believe you should not prolong a **natural** death, particularly if the person is in pain. An example of this would be if a Jew was on a ventilator to keep them alive, some might allow its **removal** to allow a natural death to happen. The Talmud states 'He who **destroys** one soul of a human being, the Scripture considers him as if he should destroy a whole **world**'.

There are times when Jews believe that they have a responsibility to preserve life. This is called **pikuach nefesh** (an obligation to save a life) and emphasizes how important life is as it comes above everything else, even the **mitzvot**. On Shabbat the concept of pikuach nefesh is more important than keeping the **Shabbat** law and you would be allowed to break it in a life or death situation.

An example of this is **transplant** surgery. Most Jews agree with transplants as it is an **honour** to donate organs. However, some disagree as they believe the body should be buried in its **entirety** and this cannot happen if organs have been **removed**.

The story of **Adam** and Eve disobeying God teaches that God has allowed human beings free will to **decide** how they should live their lives. Actions will always have **consequences**, choosing to follow God will lead to a life of **fulfilment** and God judging favourably on the Day of **Judgement**. Using free will to justify bad actions eg lying or **stealing** will not bring them closer to God. The consequences faced by Adam and Eve were **severe** and still affect humans today.

In the Torah there are **613** mitzvot, 248 (the number of bones there are in a human **body**) are positive and tell Jews how to **strengthen** their bond with God. There are **365** negative mitzvot (the number of days in a year) which tell Jews what not to do to prevent the **relationship** with God being damaged. The mitzvot guide Jews how to live and help Jews make responsible choices.

The first **four** of the 10 Commandments tell how to conduct your relationship with God. Many of the other mitzvot give further **guidance** on how to improve the relationship and focus on areas like **worship**, sacrifice, food laws and observance of festivals.

In the Torah, loving God and loving your **neighbour** cannot be separated. A person who does not show love for others cannot be showing love for **God**. Many of the mitzvot do not just tell Jews what to do but help them live as true members of their **faith** community.











